[Ait Mh'nd]

/178 cont./

634 that was reflected up to the last times of siba /revolt/ in the
613 political rivalry between the two original ikhs-s: a. Umghar and
173 a. Bakhkha. The former was traditionally devoted to municipal
669 preponderance. The latter, to the agricultural initium. Neutral, the ikhs of the Imzilen provided conciliators: it was again asked recently, by a tumultuary election, for a customary judge. The a. Lamin started the war. The ait Umghar, having formed an alliance with the Idma and their emerging dynasty, the a. Ânunu, consolidated their own power and ensured the advantage to the amghar Âbdesslam b. Âbdelmalek, father of the present chief.

634 Today, the a. Mh'nd include 120 foyers, to which it is
619 proper to add 44 emigrant ones, more or less settled outside.
592 These figures, at the time of the 1929 investigation, were respec-
162 tively 100 and 13 hearths. Progression of 1/5 in 20 years.

/179/ An Archaic Emigration

166 This emigration is an ancient phenomenon. The travelers
167 establish residence in the country of their choice, but keep their lands in their native country. They are seen again at harvest time. In April, 1951, a force of 60 men, that is, one from every two foyers, descended into the plain for the harvest. On the other hand, a worker emigration is still unknown.

About a third of the a. Mh'nd have settled outside of the
[179] Seksawa. This phenomenon, of ancient type, and not yet influenced by the industrial thrust of Morocco, doubtlessly has a certain documentary value. Among these emigrant foyers one counts: 1 settled in Marrakech, 4 in Casablanca, 3 at Imintanout, 3 at Agadir Inflas (Dwiran), 8 in ait Âbdella, 2 at Ghdir Bnan, 4 in Ud Didan, 3 in Ud Mumna, 4 at Lalla^{C}Ariba, 1 in Ud Sawla (Ud Besseba^{C}), 10 at Tafttacht (Chyâd'ma), 1 in ait ^{C}Aliwach (Mjjat'). That is, all departed toward the north.

It seemed interesting to find again in the plain, where they are within direct reach of the investigation, some of these temporary or definitive emigrants.

166 Brahim u H'ammo n-a. Umzil (60 years old), although living
• 159 at Agadir Inflas (Dwiran), still has all his relatives in a. Mh'nd.

[Ait Mh'nd]

/179 cont./

166 159 From the time he was 40, he has shuttled between the two villages; it is doubtlessly his example that made several of his neighbors decide to settle, like him, in the plain. In a. Mh'nd he has kept some lands, which his son exploits. He trades at Agadir Inflas, despite his already old blindness. He is married to a woman from the Dwiran and counts on ending his days in the plain.

Lh'sen u Abdallah n-a. Barka (40 years old) came to Takennurt (lower Seksawa) in 1945 (famine). He lost his lands in ait Mh'nd, but has not given up getting them back. For the time being, he cultivates his wife's field at Takennurt. His wife, originally from the ait Abdella, has given him three children. He regards himself as established in residence; nevertheless he still has a nephew in a. Mh'nd.

His nephew Moh'ammed u Ali n-a Barka (30 years old) emigrated in 1945 (famine) to Agadir Inflas (Dwiran), lives there without land, as an agricultural day-laborer. He has kept some fields and a house in a. Mh'nd, to which he hopes to return one day. Married to a woman from the a. Lh'sen and father of 4 children.

Lh'oseyn b. Lkhd'ir n-a. Abdennur (50 years old) has no lands at Ilutjan (Bas /Lower/ Seksawa), but he possesses some in a. Mh'nd, where his son has stayed to cultivate them. At Ilutjan, he lives as an agricultural associate /Fr. associé, associate, partner, member/, has married a foreign woman (Idma), from whom he has five children. He does not count on remaining at Ilutjan forever, but on going back to end his days in the country.

Moh'ammed u Bella n-a. Umzil (35 years old) has been at Bulᶜwan for only a year. He does not have lands here, but keeps some in a. Mh'nd, from where poverty drove him. Married to a woman from his home, he counts on returning for the harvest and coming back only for the next tillage, still as an agricultural associate.

Nearly analogous case of Abdallah u Moh'ammed (40 years old), working at Agadir Inflas as khammès /settler to whom one fifth of the produce is allowed/, of Lh'oseyn u Lh'sen n-a. Barka (40 years old), hireling at Taqennurt, of Lh'sen u Abdallah (20 years old), khammès at Tizi Wargyun, and of several other young men.

[Ait Mh'nd]

166 /180/ Moh'ammed u Ah'med n-a. Umzil (45 years old) has
159 been settled since his youth at Bul^{c}wân, as a client of the amghar. He has built himself a house and is considered a man of the country, although his wife is also from the a. Mh'nd. He considers himself permanently established. Similarly, his relative Lh'sen u Ah'med, although he still shuttles to and from the mountains.

Addi u Moh'ammed n-a. Umzil (55 years old) has been at Ilutjan as khammès since his youth. One day he married a woman from Ilutjan and acquired some lands at the place. He nevertheless returns to the mountains each year in order to buy walnuts.

His relative Ali u Moh'ammed (50 years old), who similarly married at Ilutjan, lost his wife and has been married again to a compatriot. But he has kept some lands at Ilutjan, where he is permanently established.

166 This report, made on the spot by L. Robine, who should indeed find here an expression of my gratitude, gives information on about a dozen individual cases. The same inquiry, carried out at Tafttacht in Chyâd'ma, gives another nuance: that of people naturalized earlier in a foreign tribe, but still preserving more or less this landed and sentimental tie with the village of origin.

However that may be, and even being a matter of the limited sector at the outlet of the Seksawa in the Dir, this emigration, thus fixed at different moments of age and antiquity, does not fail to illustrate the essential mobility -- arrivals and departers -- of the population in the western Haut-Atlas. But this mobility modifies neither the basic rhythms nor structures.

Improving the Ground

241 The a. Mh'nd ground, in relation to the rest of the valley agriculture, constitutes quite a strong unit, as the figures below prove: cereal cultivation, irrigated, barley, 50 ha. -- maize, 25 ha.; dry, barley, 32 ha. Arboriculture: 1,590 almond trees
[233] irrigated, 5,750 dry; 2,230 walnut trees. Let us add a stock of 195
[556] bovines, 470 ovines, 720 goats. Sign of affluence: 14 mules.

241 To each of these activities, irrigated crops, dry crops, live-
233 stock breeding, correspond organized sectors, among which some

/319 cont./

792 zaouia, or the same village, already makes a contrast stand out.
794 It is not rare that the local scholar very soon affirms his distrust with regard to agrarian rites. He displays a skepticism whose expression, astonishingly free, would belie the good nature of such a milieu, if we did not know to what extent this milieu lends itself to breaches of tone, to paradoxical proximities. Rural unanimity, rationalist criticism and occultism merge in strange and diverse fashion in the Mussulman affirmation. Certainly, the despoliation of the communal restraints, rebellion are embodied in such an individual, separated from the crowd. But they can be embodied also, more obscurely, in each one. Each may feel the appeal of protestation, of flight, of adventure. And this appeal will meet that of the "luminaries" and of orthodoxy. Hence the complexity of the phenomenon.

000 This progress is likewise that of the variety of minds and of the division of labor. It is often accomplished by the emigrant. It then includes economic traits and may end when these traits are effaced: recovery of the land and return to the mountains, fortune once made. But these stages may be passed spontaneously by such-and-such individual mentality.

What is more common today is the escape of the worker, through the union and the politics of the towns, and the escape of the /320/ military man, through the jovial impiety of the camps.
792 But the scholar, too, "escapes" in his fashion, through the occult
794 powers of writing, the advancement of his culture, the repudiation of the rural imperatives. The role of communal officiant, which is given him by the group, is greatly surpassed by his sallies of an individual more refined than his brothers. This depassment can lead to error. But it can also lead to holiness. In the recent period the Seksawa have known at least one example of these exaltations of the person, or — this is the other face of the phenomenon — of these personal elections of Allah.

159 /The rest of this section, except for the last two paragraphs,
792 is in small type in the original source./ It was only in 1915 that
175 the agurram Moh'ammed b. Abdallah, descendant on the tenth

/320 cont./

159 792 [175] generation of the saint of Assttif, died. He spent a large portion of his life at the zaouia of the Mez'ud'a, where his intervention re-established harmony during a difficult succession of cheikh /sheik/. It is known that this zaouia, revived by the teaching of Timgilcht, and mother of several other zaouias of the plain, exercises a great influence in the mountains: notably upon the a. Lh'sen, on the Tigguga, but also on the ensemble of the Seksawa.

What is remarkable about it, in the popular consciousness, is that the holiness has been renewed there, in the course of generations, and each time under a different figure. In the [175] seventeenth century, sidi Sâid u Bubker, Orient sherif, joined the Nâçirian cycle, then at the height of its freshness. He was such a just man that, when he circulated about, he muzzled his donkey in order to avoid the slightest damage to others' fields. [176] His grandson, sidi Ah'med u Ali, was a healer. He was called the saint "of the bees," lwali n-tiz'z'wa. His bees plundered the plain downstream. People from the distant Chichaoua came to complain to him. "Mark them," he told them; they did this, sprinkling the little animals with henna. The saint, then having proof of the taᶜaddî, condemned the guilty ones to leave his mountain. Above his tomb, overlooking the immense perspective of the Mez'ud'a and Ud Besseba ᶜ plain, was erected a madrasa, still famous, and which has hived off into the plain, covering it with its subsidiaries — Buᶜanfir, Saᶜîdât among others. A scholar of the Italen, one qualified from Timgilcht, comes from time to time to revive the old body. He is a purist Mussulman, anxious to spurn, against even his disciples, any miraculous reputation. But it is not the same for one of the latter, from Assttif, and who is the agurram sidi Muh'ammad u Abdallah, on the name of whom this digression opened.

159 792 789 This Seksiwi, he is not at all loath for miracles. It is evening. The students are holding a session, and the lighting of the hall falls to one of them. They did not inform the man from Assttif that it was his turn to prepare the light. They anticipate his confusion. But it is they who are going to be confounded, and edified: rubbing his finger against the mat

159 /320 cont./
792 that carpeted the hall, he raised it and light was emitted from it.
789 Prudent injunctions from the master were necessary in order to dissuade him from continuing the exercise of his karâmât.

159 /321/ Moh'ammed b. Abdallah was endowed with the gift of
787 clairvoyance. According to a well-established mystical tradi-
792 tion, his visions intervened during his sleep. The account of a dream from 1312 Heg.: 1895, which permits him to converse with a deceased former Cheikh /Sheik/ and with the Prophet himself, is valuable. It is a fine text of Berbère /Berber/ religiosity, and all the more remarkable because it emanates from a personage from one of the most archaic cantons of our Seksawa. Its value as a spiritual sign, strong revealer of the atmosphere of these zaouias of the South and the mystical escapes that sometimes force their way through at some interstice of these closed societies, is remarkable enough that it might not be fruitless to give a partial translation of it below.

"I was in a half sleep. I saw myself in the mausoleum of sidi Ah'med u Ali, conversing with the blessed sidi Ah'med b. Mh'ammed, expert on questions concerning the zaouia. We felt the need to ask the opinion of the venerable sidi Mh'and. My companion called him, and sidi Mh'and appeared at the door. I embraced him, and he embraced me, as a friend does to a friend. He asked me, 'Are you a sincere friend?' I said I was. We then continued the discussion until I observed that the Prophet's presence was necessary in order for us to resolve a particular point. I called him three times, and we were dazzled by an immense flash, and such that each of us was constrained to shield his face with his hand. And the Prophet entered among us, by way of the outside door of the zaouia. My half sleep was illuminated by it. The Prophet held Abraham by the hand. They seated themselves beneath the window that faces East, and we placed ourselves in a circle around them. And the Prophet urged us to follow his path, and told us things that I have forgotten. Then Sidi Abdallah Frugi moved among us. He was dragging a sword as if he had just come from a battle..."

/321 cont./

159 And the session continues, full of color for the eyes and in-
787 struction for the heart. The account that is given of it contains precise allusions to the crisis that the house was then going through and announces events that, it seems, took place afterwards without fail. One is thus dealing with a jurisprudential oracle here (1).

1. On the mantic of the dream, L. Massignon, "Le folklore chez les mystiques musulmans /Folklore among the Mussulman mystics/," Mélanges René Basset, t. I, pp. 259 sq., 264, 269. Numerous anecdotes of this type in the Manâqib al-H'ud'aykî.

Certainly not with a Songe de Scipion /Dream of Scipio/. But the continuity with the Abrahamic message, the reminder of the great Witnesses are expressed here with a vigor that has to make this last saint of the Seksawa a being of imitation and edification.

792 Of what may be felt in the presence of such persons, not by the common herd taken with contracts for agricultural assurance or payer for amulets, but by the humble disciple, adolescent "of prayer and of desire" (2),

2. According to the magnificent expression of L. Massignon.

who hides his fervor in the obscure cells of the zaouia, here is still-warm evidence. On the blank page of a volume, /322/ [1176] both a solemn pledge and talisman, a young man, Brahim Nffisi, "dedicates his being, his goods, his destiny" to the sherif sidi Jilâlî b. Ah'mad as-Sibâ^{C}î in exchange for his mu^{C}âchara, and the latter promises to dispense it to him. It would be too easy to see in this veritable act of "affrèrement" /becoming brothers/, [1176] dated 1194 Heg.: 1780, only a trait of suspect friendship. This

/121 cont./

*631 Three great lords, they will tell us, command the mountains of the Masmouda.

To the East, in the heart of the Atlas, it is first of all the Telwet chiefs who extend their authority over innumerable populations, while relying on the little tribe of the Glawa (2).

[101]

2. To designate the tribes we shall indiscriminately use here their Arab or Berbère /Berber/ names. In current practice, the Arab name serves especially when one speaks of the relations of the tribe with the Makhzen /makhzan/; in the country itself, only the Berbère /Berber/ form is used. Thus the Haha are designated among themselves by the name of Ihahan, the Mtougga by Imtouggen, Glawa by Iglawa, Chtouka by Achtouken, Gedmiwa by Igedmiwon, etc.

*[634] By possession of the two versants of the great chain, they meet the one of the districts of Skoura, of the Dadès, and of the Todgha, and thus thrust a threatening point to the East toward the Tafilelt. [792] [795] Toward the Sahara, the whole upper course of the Dra wadi, the richest valley of the South, according to the words of Foucauld, is subject to them, and their advice is taken as far as Tamegrout, where the great Nasirya marabouts sit, leaders of one of the most active brotherhoods in Morocco and whose religious prestige is exerted as far as the most remote cantons. Toward the South they come to the borders of the desert, nearly to the vicinity of Tisint. In the Southwest of their command, in the direction of the Anti-Atlas, the Zenaga, the Souktana, the great confederation of the Aït Waouzgit of the Sirwa, submit passively to their *631 domination. Si El Madani Glawi, the uncontested chief of this •159 veritable kingdom, has even been the grand vizier of Sultan 175 Moulay ʿAbd el Hafid in the last hours of Moroccan anarchy. In disgrace for a time, he nevertheless took his place again and

/121 cont./

*631
• 159
[175]

succeeded in again extending his power further after the submission of the chiefs of the South to France. The death of that great policy, which took place in 1919, did not lead to the ruin of his work; his nephew, Si Hammo, received in his inheritance most of the mountain tribes; his young /122/ brother in particular, El Hajj Thami, pasha of Marrakech, was consequently able to play an important role in the pacification of Morocco. His military and political successes earned for him the highest distinctions. Through his cleverness in gaining the support of the highest authorities by multiplying sumptuous receptions, the pasha acquired the reputation of an all-powerful and magnificent leader, and he willingly appears to foreigners as the viceroy of the South of Morocco.

In the upper valley of the Nefis dwells the old Si Tayeb Gontafi, already famous in the reign of Moulay el Hasan for his courage, ambition, and immense wealth. Although his political fortune has not been as brilliant as that of the Telwet chiefs, from his medieval burg of Tagontaft or his picturesque dwelling of Talat n Yaqoub he governs five large mountain tribes in the very center of this country which in former times was the kingdom of the Almohades. Not long ago, after the death of the vizier Ba Hmad, regent of the young Moulay ʿAbd el ʿAziz, Gontafi warred in the Sous plain and conquered part of the Anti-Atlas. Won over to France in 1912, he commanded the marches of Tiznit in the name of the Sultan for four years and held in check the last unsubjugated Berbère /Berber/ tribes of the Far South.

Still more to the West we find, in the casbah of Bouaboud, ʿAbd el Malek Tiggi, chief of the Mtougga. Like his rival of the Nefis and his Telwet competitor, he has command on the two versants of the great chain, but his possessions extend besides, toward the North, over several Arab tribes of the "Azaghar" of Marrakech (1).

1. Azaghar in Berbère /Berber/ has the meaning of plain, most often large plain. The small plains, particularly when they are cultivated, often take the name of Tagrəgra.

/122 cont./

*631 •159 Moreover, his influence is exerted well beyond the boundaries of his fief. Thanks to his cleverness, to his deep knowledge of all the intrigues, he makes himself heard by all the independent minor Berbère /Berber/ chiefs in the region of the high summits. His friendships suffice for him to make security prevail on the trails of the Makhzen /makhzan/ in the Atlas. Finally, by means of his alliances with the Arabs of the plain of the North, old Mtouggi maintains valuable relations with the other Maᶜqil tribes remaining in the Sous and the Sahara. Wary, prudent, even crafty, master in the art of intrigue, he is adept at double dealing, but resolute also when it is necessary, /123/ most often pitiless; his name is feared and respected in all the tribes of the western Atlas.

*631 648 On the rough coast of the Ocean, the old confederation of the Haha, subject to the Makhzen /makhzan/ for centuries, closely controlled at present by our "bureaux" /offices/, it, too, formerly knew the organization of the great commands. At the time of our conquest, two powerful lords were fiercely contesting for power there: Mohammed Anflous was governing the tribes of the North, and ᶜAbd er-Rahman Gellouli those of the South. Won over to France for a time, these two enemy chiefs became reconciled in order to betray us; defeated and put to flight by our troops, they had to make way for minor kaids without true strength, who at present hold all their authority from the investiture of the Sultan.

*631 159 These two great kaids of the Haha, who disappeared at the time of our arrival in the Moroccan South, had themselves shared the political legacy of the great chief that El Hajj ᶜAbdallah ou Bihi was. The lowliest shepherd still knows his name and successes, and the poets have not ceased to sing his glory. Originating from the Ait Zelten, ᶜAbdallah ou Bihi had, as we said, led all his tribes in the name of the Makhzen /makhzan/ to the conquest of the Anti-Atlas (1).

1. Cf. above, p. 142.

/123 cont./

*631 Under his authority, the whole confederation then knew twenty
•159 years of prosperity, and one then saw in the casbahs of the Azaghar of the Aït Zelten and of Amhach all the kaids and sheiks of the mountains and plains of the Sous coming to bring presents to the great victorious kaid. Ruined by the intrigues of the chiefs neighboring Bouaboud, El Hajj ʿAbdallah ou Bihi disappeared at one stroke, poisoned by order of the sultan Sidi Mohammed in 1868, after having long known a fortune similar to the one that the kaids of the Glawa have in our day.

Finally, in Taroudant, former capital of the Makhzen /makhzan/ in the Sous, ten times ruined and ten times reconstructed, there resides a powerful Arab pasha, master of the tribes established around the town by the Sultans. Haida ou Mwis, who died in 1917 in the service of the Makhzen /makhzan/ in a battle to the south of Tiznit, had long contained the rebel tribes of the Anti-Atlas, destroyed their fortresses nearest to the plain, and dispersed their turbulent councils of notables. The minor Berbère /Berber/ chiefs of the mountains rendered him homage up to the /124/ desert. His son, heir to an extensive fief, firmly established over the tribes of the Sous valley, willingly accepts the title of caliphate /Fr. khalifat/ of the Sultan and tries to direct, as his father did, with less success, it is true, the politics of the Far South.

*631 Many other kaids named by the Sultan still live in the tribes of the Azaghar of Marrakech or of the Sous, but their personal influence is weak; they cling by instinct or by necessity to one or another of the masters of the mountains, who have been called the "lords of the Atlas." Everywhere, as a matter of fact, the three great kaids cross their intrigues; they try, by imposing an alliance upon the minor chiefs, to extend their power toward the South and to increase unceasingly the number of their tributary subjects.

In the Anti-Atlas, only the unsubjugated Igezzoulen, grouped in the region of the old kingdom of the Tazerwalt, where the sons of Sidi Ahmed ou Mousa formerly reigned, still concentrate their
[159] last efforts at resistance in their infertile mountains. Near the desert a ghost pretender, Merebbi Rebbo, lives at Kerdous; he is

/124 cont./

*631 .159 the brother of El Hiba, sultan of the holy war in the South, and the son of Ma el ʿAïnin, sorcerer and theologian who left the desert of Mauritania twenty years ago to help the Sultan drive the Christians from the Empire. By his presence, this false sherif gives the revolt in which the tribes of the western Anti-Atlas persist the excuse of legality. Thus his existence confirms, even for the dissident region, our first impression of a Southern Morocco organized in a uniform manner into great commands according to rules of geographical division that are both simple and clear.

II. The internal organization of the great commands. --

*631 Let us proceed further with the appearances, alone observable for the moment, in order to understand, thanks to our guides, the external aspects of this political organization of the great kaids, which seems so different from that of the other Berbère /Berber/ countries of North Africa.

Although the great chiefs of the Atlas are subject to the Sultan and sometimes invoke his name to justify their conquests, we see, by the firm domination that they exercise over the mountain tribes, that their personal authority is much stronger than that of the ephemeral kaids of the plains of the North. We might have been tempted at first to think that these chiefs must be /125/ limited in the exercise of their command by the local institutions, whose democratic tendencies are so marked in other regions, such as the Rif, the Kabylie /Kabylia/, and the Aurès; but, on the contrary, the masters of the tribes seem to us to form here a veritable aristocratic and feudal class, established above the populations that they govern. When these mountain kaids assemble [628] their warriors, as during the reign of Moulay ʿAbd el ʿAziz, in [721] order to settle their quarrels among themselves, they disturb the whole country, without anyone's being able to intervene in order to stop their dissensions; if the Empire weakens, one sees them descending to the plains to fight over the rich regions of the Azaghar of Marrakech, to compete in order to get the government of the capital of the South and to protect the ruler. Even [152] when the lords of the Atlas return to their high valleys, they are still to be feared, and nobody knows exactly the limit of their

/275 cont./

121 who appeared about 1860, that of a minor amghar of the Seksawa,
*634 El Hajj Hafid of the canton of the Idma, grown great at the time
128 of the rivalry of the kaids of the Mtougga and of the Nefis at the beginning of the present century, finally, the spectacle of the rivalries of the amghars of the tribe of the Aït Semmeg for 80 years will make us understand better what help the opposition of the Berbère /Berber/ leffs brings to the ambitious.

175 IV. The beginnings of the amghar of Tagontaft (1850-1860).
*634 -- At the beginning of the nineteenth century, when the country
616 of the Nefis was still placed under the distant authority of the kaids of Agergour, of the tribe of the /276/ Ouzgita of the Jbel Kik, the villages that rise in the mountains on both sides of the valley belonged, according to the cantons, to the two leffs of the "Aït Atman" and "Aït Iraten." From the Aghbar to the entrance of the wadi into the plain, these cantons of the two parties alternated regularly, and nowhere did the "checkerboard" of Berbère /Berber/ rivalries achieve so perfect an equilibrium between the two alliances. Each group obeyed a minor amghar who held power both from the Makhzen /makhzan/ and from the notables, and succeeded in establishing a just balance between the opposite tendencies of the two forms of government.

175 About 1850 the war between the two leffs, the "Aït Atman"
*634 and the "Aït Iraten," became extremely violent between Tinmel
616 and Agergour, and the minor chief of the canton of Toug el Khir
726 won out over his enemy of the Targa n Aït Iraten, who perished in the combat. The defeated "Aït Iraten" of Targa and of the Asif Amezghouni then called on their leff brothers from the cantons of ʿAlla, Tagontaft, and Mouldiert, in the Haut-Atlas /High Atlas/, who came in large numbers, under the command of their amghars, to help them in the name of the ancient bonds.

175 One of these amghars, El Hajj Ahmed n Aït Lhasen, descend-
•159 ant of a taleb of the Anti-Atlas, who had formerly come into the
*634 valley of the Nefis in the capacity of village fqih /faqih/, was commanding the group of the four small hamlets of Gokten, Wigit, Isqalen, Artatein, to which one gives the name of Tagontaft. El Hajj Ahmed, who was both a respected fqih /faqih/ and

/276 cont./

175 amghar, taught the religious sciences to many pupils; he shared,
•159 according to custom, the profits of power with the "Aït Arbaᶜin"
*634 of his "moudaᶜ." He was a simple man without ambition, who was not impelled by anything to leave the path traced out by the double tradition of the Makhzen /makhzan/ and the Berbère /Berber/ government.

His son Mohammed, who was then about thirty years old, was endowed with both great courage and a surprising spirit of enterprise. Both greedy and generous, noble and sly, he was also a redoubtable adversary in combat, where he rushed on the enemy, recognizable by his tall stature and his black beard. His physical strength was unusual, and the sight of him engendered in the minds of his adversaries an inexpressible terror, which was sometimes attributed to a kind of magical power.

After a disagreement with his father, Mohammed went /277/ to Agergour on the Jbel Kik, to the kaid El Hajj Ahmed of the Ouzgita, and succeeded in obtaining for himself the command of the four small hamlets of Tagontaft. He began immediately to build himself a veritable amghar's house at Wigit, cutting widely into the beautiful olive-trees that adorn the slopes of the hills. As his father was reproaching him then for destroying the crops and trees in a country where productive land is rare and precious, Mohammed replied that "other crops and trees existed in the Asif Nefis, among his leff enemies, the "Aït Atman."

175 Later the rapid conquests of the amghar Mohammed appeared
159 so surprising that the natives sometimes spread the rumor that the
*634 family of the Aït Lahsen /sic/, Mohammed or his father the fqih,
616 had discovered a silver mine by secret proceedings, which they
726 took up from their ancestors from the Sous, clever, as is known, at discovering hidden treasures. But all those who lived through the little epic of the Tagontaft chiefs know very well that at the beginning the amghar Mohammed had only the strength of his "ikhs" and "no mine other than the tribe." Indeed, we see the amghar Mohammed, hardly in possession of the power, begin by conquering the nearby village of Tamerwout, which formed a kind of islet of "Aït Atman" in the leff of the "Aït Iraten"; then,

/277 cont./

175 after absorbing this hostile group, engage resolutely in the fight
•159 against the neighboring chiefs of the adverse leff. These were
*634 the amghars of Tagemout, Tagadirt n Oumious, Timlilt, and
Arghen, between Tagontaft and Tinmel. The forces of the young
616 amghar of Tagontaft were made up of all the warriors of his can-
726 ton, completely devoted to his person, and of those of the fractions of his leff: ᶜAlla and the Asif Amezghouni.

As soon as his first successes enabled him to increase his resources, the amghar Mohammed engaged a band of mercenaries made up of adventurers from all directions: from the Chtouka, from the Inda ou Zal, and from the Marrakech plain. Holding the whole mountain, he then communicated with his allies of ᶜAlla by a goat path from the Adrar n Tasaft. From the heights of ᶜAlla, Tagontaft, and Mouldiert incessant expeditions descended by his order against the villages of the Nefis. Soon, thanks to his provocations, war was kindled between the two leffs in the whole valley of the Nefis as far as the Jbel Kik. Finally, the intervention of the kaid of Agergour became necessary in order /278/ to restore order, and Si Brahim, brother and successor of the kaid Ahmed, who had left on the pilgrimage to Mekke /Mecca/, where he was to die, summoned into his casbah the young amghar of Tagontaft, who prudently refused to present himself. Then Mohammed decided to pursue in independence the conquest of the high valleys that had formerly formed the first kingdom of the Almohades.

For ten years he continued to disturb the mountains by the struggle of the leffs, to increase his forces patiently, and to prepare himself by the organization of his conquests to surmount the difficult stage that was to make a tribal chief of him (1).

1. Cf. farther on, p. 395.

175 V. The amghar El Hajj Hafid of the Idma (1905-1925). --
159 At the end of the last century, the cantons of the mountain
*634 Seksawa, like all those of the Tichka region, were still firmly attached to the traditional regime of the moqaddems; only the

/278 cont./

175 neighboring "taqbilt" of the Dir had amghars, Ahmed Ou Bihi
•159 among the Aït ᶜAbdallah, Mbarek Chtittihi among the Aït Mousa.
*634 Not long after the time when Si Mokhtar, son of the moqaddem Hammo ou Bella, had taken power among the Aït Lhasen, after having cleverly suppressed his enemies, as we have said, the son of a moqaddem of the Idma, Hafid Ou Mohammed n Anino, also obtained from the Aït Arbaᶜin of his fraction, thanks to his adroitness, his prestige, and his victories over the nearby fraction of the Intedan, the title of amghar (1898). As is natural, he had to [578] wage a long struggle against his rivals in his own village, then he [682] killed them and took their property.

175 Favorable circumstances then presented themselves to the
159 new chief of the Idma, who knew how to utilize them fully.
*631 About 1905 the struggle of the two great kaids Mtouggi and
*634 Gontafi for influence was at its height; they were contending for
616 the rich tribes of the Dir and soon the whole mountain was caught
726 up in their intrigues. Si Mokhtar of the Aït Lhasen, of the leff of the "Imsifern," already highly organized in his command, espoused, not without some reticence, the cause of the Mtouggi; the two amghars Ahmed Ou Bihi and Mbarek Chtittihi, neighbors from the foot of the mountain, of the leff of the "Indghertit," wavered about the side to take, while the amghar Hafid of the Idma rallied without hestitation to the Gontafi. After a confused struggle, during which Si Mokhtar had /map appears here/ /279/ the Chtittihi assassinated and defeated the fraction of the Aït ᶜAbdallah upon driving away Ahmed Ou Bihi, the amghar of the Idma became sole chief of the leff of the "Indghertit." In the mountains, the struggle of the two great kaids was being carried on by utilizing the rivalry of the two Berbère /Berber/ alliances. Si Mokhtar was the champion of Bouaboud with the "Imsifern" to the extent that his personal interest commanded it. For his part, Hafid easily assembled the forces of the "Indghertit." It was to him that the amghars of the Aït Gaïr and all the high-mountain fractions of the Seksawa came to ask for counsel and support. For twenty years the old amghar of the Idma could profit from the advantages of this role of leff chief; without losing any of his

[TEXT CONTINUED ON PAGE 371]

/279 cont./

175 independence with respect to the great kaid of the Nefis, he kept
•159 intact a readily accepted authority, whose whole secret was in
*631 the strength of the Berbère /Berber/ alliances (1).
*634
616
726

1. Notes of F. de La Chapelle.

VI. The amghars of the Ida Ou Zeddagh (1840-1925). -- It
175 is under conditions analogous to the ones that favored the amghar
*634 Hafid of the Idmą that two families of amghars have kept power
without difficulty on the south versant of the Atlas for several
[616] generations. Although these minor sheiks -- the Aït Bazzi of
Talekjont and the Id Mansour of Talemt -- had seen their liberty
restrained by the close surveillance exercised over them by the
Makhzen /makhzan/ of Taroudant, it is easy to see that all their
power was held, like that of their rivals in the high mountains,
in their role as leff chiefs.

The political circumstances under which the amghars of Talekjont and Talemt exercised their commands were particularly stable during the nineteenth century. Up to the time of the conquest of the country by the great kaids, on all the south versant of the Atlas, from the Onein to the Ida Ou Zal, the organization of the tribes did not change. The regime of the little Berbère /Berber/ cantons varied according to their distance from the valley of
[184] the Sous, subject to the caliphate of the sultan at Taroudant. In
the high mountains they were small republics, directed by an assembly presided over by a moqaddem, among the Aït Waggonsan, the Tigouga, the Ida Ou Msattog, or by a simple council of inflas without a moqaddem at Adebdi, among the Aït Soual, the Ihengirn; on the slopes were found minuscule cantons governed by a senate of /280/ three or four notables; finally, large market towns subject to amghars in touch with the Makhzen /makhzan/ existed at the very edge of the plain. Among these diverse terri-
[616] torial units, the bond between two leffs, the "Ida ou Zeddagh" (1)

[619] 1. The name Ida ou Zeddagh designates both a tribe and a leff of this tribe and the neighboring regions.

/280 cont./

175 and the "Aït Zolit," was strong enough for the authority of the
*634 minor chiefs to extend, by a chain of alliances, from their
616 casbah near the Sous to the highest villages of the crests.

175 Originally, about 1850, the amghar ᶜAli n Aït Bazzi and
•159 his rival, Ahmed Ou Mansour, were only minor sheiks similar to
*634 those who existed, as we have seen, in the same period in the
616 high valley of the Nefis, intent on satisfying both the Makhzen
726 /makhzan/ and the Berbère /Berber/ tradition. When El Hajj ᶜAbdallah Ou Bihi, great kaid of the Haha, had entrusted to his caliphate, the sherif Moulay Idris, the command of Taroudant, the latter interested himself in establishing closer relations with the two amghars in the hope of bringing little by little the montagnards of their respective leffs to the Makhzen. But the opposition of the two alliances ceaselessly fighting was such that he soon had to give it up; in his powerlessness, he is reported to have said one day, designating the two white houses of the enemy sheiks, so near each other and yet irreducibly hostile:

[539] "Satan -- father of discord -- laid two eggs at the foot of the Atlas. Upon breaking them, I found in the first ᶜAli Ou Mansour. As for the second, that of the Bazzi, there was nothing inside but wind!"

ᶜAli Ou Mansour had, indeed, brought his leff to the chief of the Makhzen /makhzan/, while ᶜAli of Talekjont later fled into the mountains and took the side of the Mtougga against the Haha. But neither the one nor the other was able to bring to the caliphate of the sultan the submission of his tribes, because they were powerless to make the two leffs live in peace. Their authority was based only on the rivalry of the alliances, and they could keep it only by fanning the quarrels. Afterward, the Aït Bazzi supported the "siba" against the Makhzen, the pasha of Taroudant against the Gontafi, while their adversaries -- the sons of ᶜAli Ou Mansour -- constantly stayed on the opposite side, that of the Haha, that of the Makhzen of Taroudant with Haida Ou Mwis, that of the Gontafi against Haida.

/281/ Two families have thus kept their positions, with alternate successes and reverses; in the eyes of the montagnards of their leff, their prestige has survived all their defeats.

/300 cont./

*634 "tinoubga" and make known to all his strength and generosity; if
616 he happens to start fighting with a powerful amghar of the ad-
554 verse leff, he sees Berbères /Berbers/ who have come from fara-
571 way tribes that he scarcely knows arrive at the door of his house. In the name of the traditional alliances they come spontaneously to bring him their co-operation. Nevertheless, his power is not really established. Still closely attached to the traditions of the republics of the high valleys by the leff bond, he must be careful of his allies, who would abandon him at the first defeat and especially at the first "frida." As long as he has not conquered and made his own the lands of his enemies, his authority will remain precarious and his resources will be reduced to the daily booty of his military expeditions.

175 /301/ I. The amghar of Tagontaft conquers the Asif Nefis
•159 (1860-1876). -- To understand clearly the circumstances in which
*634 the fraction amghar can manage to consolidate and extend his authority, there is no better example to consider than that of Mohammed n Aït Lhasen of Tagontaft, whose progress follows with perfect regularity the successive stages of the power of a Berbère /Berber/ chief.

175 We left this minor amghar at the time when in his minuscule
159 domain of the Haut-Nefis he had taken command of the leff of
*634 the "Aït Iraten" in order to conquer the "Aït Atman" of the val-
616 ley, at the time when he had just asserted his independence with
726 respect to the kaid of the Ouzgita of Agergour on the Jbel Kik (1).

1. Cf. above, p. 367.

[648] He is now going to conquer the tribe of the Nefis, and we shall see him later, aided by his son, succeed in constituting, under the aegis of the Makhzen /makhzan/, one of the large commands of the Atlas.

By his former origins, the kaid of Agergour, whose authority Mohammed n Aït Lhasen was rejecting, belonged to the leff of the "Aït Atman"; the call to revolt issued by the amghar of Tagontaft was therefore certainly to rally all the cantons of the big valley hostile to the Kaid's leff.

/301 cont./

175 big valley hostile to the kaid's leff. In order to make the "Aït
• 159 Iraten" return to obedience, the kaid Brahim Gergouri made the
* 634 usual arrangements in such a case: he solicited and obtained
616 from the pasha of the casbah of Marrakech the authorization to
726 assemble a "harka" with the co-operation of the old kaid ᶜOmar
648 Touzzalti, governor of the Gedmiwa.
* 631 The column constituted by the combatants of the Ouzgita, the Gedmiwa, and by the leff of the "Aït Atman" from the lower course of the Nefis became entangled in the narrow passage that leads to the Tizi n Test by a bad path often confused with the bottom of the river itself. After a stop at Imegdal, where the forces of the Makhzen /makhzan/ finished assembling and set up a camp whose traces are still visible, the harka went back up the course of the Oued and arrived in the basin of Tinmel, where the amghar Mohammed had already been established for some years. General pillage of the yalley was begun immediately; the hamlets of the "Aït Iraten" were "devoured," but those of the "Aït Atman," in the general disorder of the harka, were not spared either.

Having arrived at Taferghoust, at the entrance to the gorges of the Ogdemt, the /302/ kaids stopped for a moment. The Gontafi could then cleverly negotiate in secret with ᶜOmar Touzzalti, kaid of the Gedmiwa. The order of the Makhzen /makhzan/ was to advance into the mountains up to where they would get to destroy the rebel's house. The amghar then pretended to flee on the south versant of the Atlas, among the Aït Semmeg, and it was made to appear that his dwelling was being demolished. Then ᶜOmar Touzzalti commanded his contingents to withdraw.

A great discussion then arose among the allies. The "Aït Atman" were complaining that the villages of their leff brothers had been destroyed without the harka's having been authorized to devour the "Aït Iraten" of the villages of Tagontaft and Mouldirt, remaining intact amidst the olive trees. The two leffs, "Imsifern" and "Indghertit," of the Gedmiwa then took sides respectively for their natural allies, "Aït Iraten" and "Aït Atman," and soon the melee spread within the harka of the Makhzen /makhzan/. At this shameful spectacle, the kaid ᶜOmar Touzzalti, who had

/302 cont./

descended to a house in the village of Anebdour and was observing events, jumped on his mule, and, climbing the rough road of the Tizi n Imiri, he returned most quickly to his casbah in Amismiz, abandoning the people under his jurisdiction to their quarrels. The enemies of the Gontafi dispersed in confusion, without succeeding in reducing his prestige.

The amghar Mohammed interested himself from then on in pursuing his policy of conquest with the greatest energy. The amghar Bou Naser, of the village of Aghren, of the "Aït Atman," was in flight among the Aït Tadrart of the Sirwa; he was replaced by sheiks at the disposal of the Gontafi; at Taferghoust he likewise named his friend Mohammed n Aït Hasein. Then his indomitable adversary, Mohammed n Aït Ouchefar, of the fraction of Tagemout, quite close to Tagontaft, was driven into the Aghbar and his village occupied by the "Aït Iraten." Thanks to these victories, peace was assured for some years within this little state, conquered by arms, money, and alliances. Moreover, presents sent to the pasha of the casbah of Marrakech, Brahim el Grawi, permitted the hope that the Makhzen /makhzan/ would grant some years of tranquillity to the chief of the Nefis, who did not cease protesting his devotion to the Sultan.

Henceforth we see the amghar, free to organize his domain to his liking, reinforcing himself without losing time and constructing casbahs. On the pointed summit of a hill of Tagontaft, the tribe erects by /303/ "touiza," for the new chief, the great fortress that at present bars the valley and whose appearance, both massive and proud, expresses so well the will and the energy of the chief who conceived it.

At Tinmel the elder brother of the amghar Mohammed, El Hajj Mohammed, becomes caliphate and takes possession of the property of the "Aït Atman," whom he drives from their homes and pursues as far as the territory of the Gedmiwa. The little plain of Tinmel, with its fertile lands and its olive groves, so precious in a mountain country where crops are difficult everywhere, furnishes abundant harvests. In order to store the provisions, master masons from the Tifnout come to build a large

175 /303 cont./
159 storehouse, which is still to be seen: the agadir n Waddar. They
*634 are inspired in their plans by the customary arrangement of the
[343] "igherm," or collective storehouses, of their country. Finally,
[712] in the middle of the fields of the "Aït Atman" of Talat n Yaqoub, left free by the exodus of the conquered, at the entrance to the Tinmel plain, another casbah begins to rise from the ground, less warlike than that of Tagontaft, which later will be the favorite residence of Si Tayeb Gontafi.

175 After this success, prudence counsels the amghar Mohammed
159 not to stir up war again in the fractions of the Nefis and not to
*634 risk thus provoking a new expedition of the Makhzen /makhzan/.
578 Therefore he goes to try to expand preferably toward the south among the Aït Semmeg, whose passes he holds, and in the Onein. Here, however, a serious difficulty presents itself. The "Aït
175 Iraten," who in the Nefis form the left of the Gontafi, are the
159 traditional allies of the "Ida ou Zeddagh" of the south versant of
*634 the Atlas (1).
578
616

1. Cf. above, p. 239.

Now this left obeys above all the amghars of the Bazzi family of the Talekjont, who for several years already have been in the service of the Mtougga kaids of Bouaboud. Moreover, the Bazzi have only a very limited authority and are incapable of guiding the politics of the mountain republics. Perhaps it would be cleverer to obtain the co-operation of the adverse left of the "Aït Zolit." Undoubtedly in the course of the war of the Nefis wadi these last have already come to support the amghar Achefar of Tagemout against Tagontaft; but the amghar Mohammed, made rich by his conquests, can easily find allies everywhere. He is known to be as liberal and generous as he is ardent in combat. Soon the amghar Hajj Mbarek of the Onein brings all his co-operation to the amghar of /304/ Tagontaft in exchange for suitable remuneration. At the same time, the Gontafi is backing the amghar Hijjo, a brave woman who has taken command among the Aït Oumzal in order to protect her infant sons. He also acquires

/304 cont./

175 the support of the amghars of Taberbourt of the Aït Semmeg and
• 159 of those of Talemt, enemies of the Bazzi of Talekjont.
*634 The leff of the "Aït Zolit," having thus entered with its
578 chiefs into the service of the amghar Mohammed n Aït Lhasen by
616 the overturning of the ancient alliances, became from then on the enemy of the mountain "Aït Atman." When the amghar
[727] Achefar of Tagemout, driven from his country by the master of Tagontaft, came to take refuge on the territory of the "Aït Zolit," the amghar Mbarek of the Onein betrayed him and plundered him. The refugee then fled to the Aït Oumzal, in the fraction of the amghar Hijjo, but he was poisoned there. Up to our day all the fractions thus rallied were to remain faithful to the Gontafi.

175 One last event was going to increase further the power of the
159 chief of the Nefis and make of him the uncontested master of the
*634 mountains until the day when the Makhzen /makhzan/ would
648 consent to recognize his strength officially by giving him the title
*631 of kaid.
726 The death of Brahim el Grawi, pasha of the casbah at Marrakech, which took place at the same time as that of the Sultan, Sidi Mohammed, drowned in the basin of the Agdal (1874), had just put an end to the truce that had permitted the amghar Mohammed to conquer the asif Nefis by force or politics. Ahmed ou Malek, new pasha of the casbah, had refused to ignore the Gontafi's rebel status any longer, because, they say, he was finding the presents sent to him insufficient. ʿAli Ben Lhasen of Agergour, kaid of the Ouzgita, found the moment favorable for obtaining a new expedition against his rebel sheik. He cleverly had spread in the land the rumor that the amghar Mohammed wanted to make himself independent, as the Almohades had been in the same places, and this memory was enough to make Marrakech tremble again. This time important contingents were assembled; a kaid of the "gich" /gish/, ʿAbdallah Tamachot, who represented the Makhzen /makhzan/, went back up the Nefis, accompanied by the Ouzgita and tribes of the plain and of the Dir of Marrakech: the Oulad Dlim, the Ida Ou Blal, the Gheghaia, the Souktana. At the same time the kaid Cherradi

/304 cont./

175 of Amismiz arrived by way of the Ogdemt with the forces of the
•159 Gedmiwa. /305/ Finally, the A'lt Waouzgit and the Glawa de-
*634 scended toward Tinmel, by way of the cols of the Onein, under
*631 the authority of Mohammed Ibibat, chief of Telwet and father of
648 Si el Madani Glawi.
726
[727] Before the arrival of this formidable harka, the amghar Mohammed had set afire with his own hand his supplies from Talat n Yaqoub and had taken refuge in the impregnable agadir that he had had constructed by the tribe at Tagontaft. The allied contingents were assembling in disorder in the Tinmel basin when, from the terraces of the casbah of the amghar Mohammed, there was seen advancing through the Tizi n Tgontaft the harka of the Glawi, which stopped a short distance from the fortress. What exactly happened then? Could the riches of the Gontafi, already famous, play their usual role? Did Si Mohammed Ibibat, an ambitious and prudent man, understand that he was risking being a victim of the same fate later in his mountains and that it was doubtless better to spare oneself an ally? It is also said that the amghar Mohammed of Tagontaft invoked, with the chief of Telwet, the brotherhood of the A'lt Waouzgit, to whom the tribe of the Asif Nefis as well as that of the Glawa are connected by ancient alliances. However that may be, after a sham combat at Aman n Iniris, the horsemen of Mohammed Ibibat fled and brought about panic in the whole army of the Makhzen /makhzan/, camped in the plain of Tinmel. At the same time, 75 men shut up in the house of Tayeb n Ouchefar at Tagemout were encircled and constrained by thirst to surrender unconditionally to the "A'lt Iraten." All the chiefs of the Ouzgita of the Kik and the "A'lt [727] Atman" from the Nefis wadi who were found there had their throats cut like sheep, while, through clever thoughtfulness, the captured soldiers of the Makhzen were, on the contrary, sent back after having received new clothes.

175 The rout of the great harka definitively established in the
159 south the reputation of the A'lt Lhasen of Tagontaft. People hardly
*634 knew how to explain, if it is not by the effect of the magic
554 baraka of the amghar Mohammed and his family, how "two of
798

/305 cont./

175 159 *634 554 [778] [648] [616] them were able to manage to put to flight 1,000 men from the plain." At the same time this struggle against the Sultan's forces had made a kind of champion of Berbère /Berber/ independence out of the amghar Mohammed. Without soliciting it, he had obtained the co-operation of the montagnards of the two leffs of the summits of the Tichka and of the south versant of the mountain; even from the Anti-Atlas volunteers had /306/ arrived in large numbers, who could report in their tribes the news of the marvelous success achieved at Tagontaft, almost without combat. Finally, the fugitives pursued in the whole valley of the Nefis as far as the plain of Marrakech manifested quite well on the north versant of the Atlas, by their terror, the redoubtable strength of the new chief.

[729]

175 159 *634 648 *631 It remained to have this triumph recognized by the new sultan, Moulay el Hasan. This was a new victory to carry off, still more difficult than the preceding one. The diplomatic cleverness of Si Tayeb, third son of the amghar Mohammed, ensured success. The young man, sent by his father as emissary to Marrakech, was at first loaded with chains by Ahmed ou Malek, kaid of the casbah, furious over having been defeated. Thanks to the intervention of the kaid ʿAbderrahman of the Mesfiwa and the protection of the marabout Abou ʿAli el Hasan of Timigilcht, of the Nasiria of the Dra, Si Tayeb Gontafi, sent to Fez, succeeded in getting in the good graces of the sovereign; he obtained for his part the title of kaid, and shortly afterwards his father, the amghar Mohammed, also received the investiture of the Makhzen /makhzan/ (1).

[113)

1. Cf. our study on "Le développement du pouvoir des caïds de Tagontaft /The Development of the Power of the Kaids of Tagontaft/" (Mémorial, H. Basset, Vol. II, p. 169), and "Istiqsa," Fumey trans., Archives marocaines, Vol. X, p. 302.

/306 cont./

*634 616 121 159 The rise and the development of the power of the chief of Tagontaft offer us the most complete example that we can find of a leader who became great by means of the struggle of the two leffs and who succeeded in conquering a fief of which he became the absolute master. We shall not find, in the history of the Haut-Atlas /High Atlas/ in the nineteenth century, other amghars who won such successes solely by the working of the politics of the leffs. Two other chiefs, born in the country of the Seksawa, whose political role we are going to study, did not reach the same degree of power as the Gontafi and have remained up to our day apart from the Makhzen /makhzan/. But we shall nevertheless see them rise like him, by routes a little different, above the institutions of the small Berbère /Berber/ canton that limit their first efforts, and little by little free themselves from the servitude of the leffs (2).

[127] [113]

2. We are borrowing this study of the minor chiefs of the Seksawa from the works of F. de la Chapelle, sometimes reproducing the very terms that he employs (Notes inédites sur les tribus dissidentes du commandement du Mtouggi /Unpublished notes on the dissident tribes of the command of the Mtouggi/, 1926; "Un grand caïdat du Sud-Marocain /A great kaidate of the Moroccan South/," Af. française, Oct., 1927, renseignements coloniaux /colonial information/; "La formation du pouvoir monarchique dans les tribus berbères du Haut-Atlas Occidental /The Formation of Monarchic Power in the Berber Tribes of the Western High Atlas/," Hespéris, 1928, pp. 263-285).

175 159 *634 726 II. The amghar Mokhtar Seksawi (1880-1925). -- We have already mentioned how the father of Mokhtar Seksawi, the moqaddem of Awines, /307/ Hammo ou Bella, of the canton of the

/307 cont./

175 Aït Lhasen of the "Imsifern" leff, had, in the reign of Moulay el
•159 Hasan, imprudently tried to seize power without first doing away
*634 with his enemies. Then when he was engaged in the conquest of
726 the hostile cantons, he was betrayed by his men and perished a victim of the haté of the soffs in his own village. It was at this moment that a notable of the canton of the Aït Mousa, a neighbor of the Aït Lhasen, Mbarek Chtittihi, son of a former kaid of the Makhzen /makhzan/, took the title of amghar and came to the aid of the son of the moqaddem of Awines. The young Mokhtar, already remarkable for the precocity of his political thinking, succeeded very quickly, with this support, in driving away his enemies. His success was such that his benefactor, the Chtittihi, and another amghar, Ahmed ou Bihi, sheik of the Aït ʿAbdallah, were not long in becoming alarmed about it. As a
*[631] matter of fact, the amghar of the Aït Mousa was cherishing ambitious projects; he had just succeeded in having himself named kaid and was then extending his influence over the Seksawa fractions of the high mountains; it was important for his success that the young chief of the Aït Lhasen remain docilely under his protection.

[682] Si Mokhtar then had, as we have said, the good fortune of succeeding in assassinating his unyielding adversaries in the course of a big repast of reconciliation, which he had presented to the whole fraction in his rebuilt dwelling. After that victory he immediately undertook the conquest of the tribe.

We are going to see him henceforth pursue his work with his indefatigable tenacity.

175 First of all he reduces the little nearby "taqbilt" of the Sekrat,
159 of the leff of the "Indghertit," opposed to his own; then since the
*634 Aït ʿAbdallah, of the same leff, have recognized a new chief, the
726 kaid Baddoh, whose mission is to do away with Si Mokhtar, at the
616 instigation of the kaid of Bouaboud, the amghar forestalls the designs of this emissary and has him assassinated. He appears from then on as a leff chief and rallies around him all the "Imsifern."

175 Threatened by the more and more disturbed Chtittihi, Si
159 Mokhtar does not fear starting a struggle against his former
*634
726

/307 cont./

175 benefactor. He conquers two villages of his "taqbilt" and even
•159 builds a house in one of them. But his adversaries use against
*634 him means that he does not hesitate to use himself. One day, he
726 fortunately escapes death in the explosion of an enormous charge of powder deposited under the upper chamber of the house /308/ where he is to be found with his family. This attempt is the work of a notable of the country, secretly allied with the Chtittihi and bribed by the Mtouggi.

175 Si Mokhtar constitutes for himself from then on a dependable
159 guard furnished by families allied to his; to avoid ambushes, he
*634 moves around ceaselessly, without ever saying where he is going. In
625 his casbah of Bou Taradin, he inspects the sentinels at all hours. He
602 changes his living habits ceaselessly, and his wives themselves do not know in advance in which of his houses he will come to sleep. He no longer lives anywhere but on the second floor, and the lower room is filled with stone and earth and closed with a padlock (1).

1. F. de La Chapelle, Hespéris, 1928, 3rd-4th quarter.

175 Amidst this feverish life dominated by fear of betrayal, the
159 amghar keeps an unappeased ambition nonetheless. Thanks to the
*634 incessant dissensions in the leff of the "Indghertit" of the asif of
616 the Seksawa, Si Mokhtar intervenes more and more as arbitrator,
578 relying on the "Imsifern," who are loyal to him. The troubled circumstances in the mountains favor his projects. The political situation becomes very complicated in the Atlas at this time, because of the struggle of the kaid Mtouggi against Si Tayeb Gontafi, who has conquered the valleys of the Ogdemt, of the Aghbar, and of the Asif el Mal (1904). During the rivalry of the two great kaids, who are trying to get support in the high mountains among the independent fractions, the leffs are sometimes broken up. But most often the chief of Tagontaft relies on the "Indghertit," while the Mtouggi prefers to seek the co-operation of the "Imsifern." Thus the Chtittihi becomes the ally of the Gontafi, Si Mokhtar that of the Mtouggi.

/308 cont./

175 In 1907, when the Gontafi's party succumbs before the coa-
• 159 lition of the Mtougga and the Glawa, the struggle becomes more
*634 intense. Each of the two amghars tries to have his rival assassi-
578 nated. The Chtittihi sends one of his friends, Mohammed ou
[682] Hammo, to Si Mokhtar's, giving him the mission of killing him by treachery; but the amghar of the Aït Lhasen succeeds in seducing the emissary, and in the night, when the Chtittihi approaches to hear the news of the murder of his enemy, it is he himself who falls under the dagger of Mohammed ou Hammo. For this master stroke the assassin is loaded with favors, and later he will receive the granddaughter of Si Mokhtar in marriage.

[726] The drama has hardly been performed /map appears here/ /309/
[712] when the Aït Mousa are attacked; their territory is conquered; the Chtittihi"s villages are razed, and in the middle of his adversary's fields the conquering amghar erects a command-house, which makes his victory definitive.

175 Si Mokhtar's ambition is not yet satisfied. In 1908, when
159 the amghar of the Aït ʿAbdallah, Ahmed ou Bihi, betrays the
*634 cause of the Mtouggi at one time, Si Mokhtar invades his terri-
631 tory and annexes it to his possessions. But at that moment the
578 successes of Si Mokhtar, the cleverness of his policy, the influ-
726 ence he has won over the montagnards of the Seksawa, make him
616 suspect to the kaid of Bouaboud. It is then that the amghar parts company with the great chiefs, from whom he has nothing more to expect. He goes to regain his full liberty, to renew alliances in the leff of the "Imsifern," which he has sometimes had to neglect in the preceding years. At the end of his life, Si Mokhtar succeeds both in fomenting among the Aït Wadouz, of his leff, revolt against Bouaboud and in protecting the dissident "Imsifern" from the Demsira. Some months before his death he finally takes over the nearby fraction of the Igountar, whom he annexes to his command, detaching them from the leff of the "Indghertit."

175 By the organization of his command, Si Mokhtar Seksawi,
159 who remained independent in his casbah of Bou Taradin to the
*631 end of his life, took on the air of a true kaid, for which he
*634

[TEXT CONTINUED ON PAGE 409]

/309 cont./

175 lacked only the official recognition of the Makhzen /makhzan/.
•159 His oumana /plural of amin, ameen/ collected the "zekkat" and
*631 the "ᶜachour" for him. In the "taqbilt" of his leff, he designates
*634 the moqaddems and the Aït arbaᶜin. In the conquered lands belonging to the adverse leff, his authority is often exercised in a more absolute manner through the agency of sheiks whom he imposes. Again, as at Tagontaft, the guards and confidential men are chosen from around the natal hamlet of the amghar, among the families of his companions from the first hour. Just as at Tinmel, conquered by the amghar of Tagontaft, the "Aït Atman" have all been expelled from the country, likewise here in the canton of the defeated Aït Mousa, all the former villages are devastated and the inhabitants scattered in the Marrakech plain. Their lands, having remained fallow, are little by little cultivated for the profit of the amghar; the definitive occupation of the country of the Aït Mousa is marked by the construction of a residence at Tabia, while Tigemmi Igiz, the Chtittihi's village, is completely deserted.

/310/ III. A little State of the summits (El Hajj Moulid
*634 1890-1925). -- In this same region of the Seksawa, where several
[178] independent amghars exist to our day, we are going to find another example of development of personal power which to a certain extent is opposite that of the chiefs of Tagontaft and of Bou Taradin.

*634 When one leaves the country of Mokhtar Seksawi by going
616 back up the valley of the Seksawa toward the Tichka, one finds first of all the dwelling of the amghar El Hajj Hafid, this chief of the leff of the "Indghertit" whose origin and fortune we have studied (1).

1. Cf. Book III, Ch. I, p. 367.

He is, in truth, only a war leader enfeoffed to his alliances and who cannot be compared with his powerful neighbor of the Aït Lhasen, master of a little state composed of cantons of the two parties, conquered by force, ruse, and betrayal. But still nearer